

OLC 78-2565/1

16 August 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Letter to Representative Charles E. Bennett (D., Fla.)
in Response to His Request for Views on H.R. 89

1. Legislation Staff received on 10 August 1978 a letter from Representative Charles E. Bennett (D., Fla.) to the President which had been referred to the DCI by Dr. Brzezinski. The letter from Congressman Bennett requested the President's views on H.R. 89, a bill introduced by Mr. Bennett in January 1977 that would in effect codify the Government's classification scheme. Dr. Brzezinski had sent the Congressman's letter also to the Attorney General for consideration.

2. In order to find out what the Attorney General's office was planning to do with regard to the Congressman's letter, I spoke with Mr. John Harmon, Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel today. I told Mr. Harmon we did not want to get into the detailed pros and cons of the substance of H.R. 89, but that we did want to provide the Congressman with a positive reply and that we therefore intended to generally endorse the Congressman's expression of concern over leaks of sensitive information and advise the Congressman we were studying various bills to address this general problem. I told Mr. Harmon, incidentally, we were considering a bill introduced by Senator Bentsen, S. 1578, relating to protection against the unauthorized disclosure of identities of intelligence officers. Mr. Harmon said the Attorney General's office had not yet focused on H.R. 89 and he agreed with my suggestion that we send to him a copy of our proposed response for coordination so that one letter rather than two could be provided to meet Congressman Bennett's request.

Chief, Legislation Staff
Office of Legislative Counsel

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